



The World of Tattoo: An Illustrated History

By Maarten Hesselt van Dinter

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The World of Tattoo: An Illustrated History By Maarten Hesselt van Dinter

Despite a growing fascination with tattooing among social scientists--and the popularity of tattoos themselves in general--the practice of tattooing has lacked a comprehensive historical record. Until very recently, there was no good context for writing a serious world history of tattooing. This new volume conveys the richness of the history of tattooing from antiquity to the present day.

Unlike most other tattoo books that describe one aspect this book conveys the overall picture. It takes you to each of the seven continents with descriptions of their tattoo history and tattoo practices. Thus the book provides the reader with a truly global view of tattooing. It adds new information and new examples and insights that give the reader a new perspective.

By combining empirical history, powerful cultural analysis, and a highly readable style, the author adds an important step to the ongoing effort of writing a meaningful cultural history of tattooing. He does not draw new conclusions or present shocking new theories, but suggests and invites the reader to form his own opinions. This publication presents the reader with a vast amount of textual and visual information. From the well known examples from Tahiti to rarely seen Chinese tattoos, from the Ice Maiden to modern day Western tattoos--they are all there. Many of the approximately 400 color illustrations are unique images that have never been published before.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The encyclopedic work answers the fascination with tattoos in contemporary society by focusing on the origin and purpose of tattoos in ancient and aboriginal cultures in all parts of the world. In modern society, tattoos are a matter of personal choice and often personal design, whereas in ancient and aboriginal societies, a tattoo was 'the tribal variant...generally applied according to custom and associated with taboos and magic.' These 'variants' are covered in richly-illustrated, anthropological-like chapters on the different areas of the world. Innumerable illustrations include color photographs of tattooed individuals, historical art works showing tattoos, photographs of tattoos being put on, tattooing instruments, and close-ups of tattoos showing their details. With its diversity of captivating visual matter, encyclopedic scope, and informative, general-interest text, The World of Tattoo is a leading text on this subject of renewed interest in contemporary life; and it can also be used as a reference for tattooing in particular cultures or particular historical eras."

"Tattoos are an ever-increasing part of modern life and more tattoo books are being published as a result: but none quite so extensive or detailed as The World of Tattoo: An Illustrated History, which focuses on world tattoo culture and traditions. With sections divided by area of the world and packed with pages of color photos, it's easy to focus study on one region--and with World of Tattoo's focus on history and cultural insights there's much more going on than just a photo display alone. Highly recommended not just for modern audiences interested in tattoo, but for any college-level collection strong in cultural references."

About the Author

Maarten Hesselt van Dinter is a cultural anthropologist and one of the leading Dutch experts on tattoos. His research for this book took over 10 years.

Users Review

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